

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

MAY 7, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 7, 2004, **CHRISTOPHER G. MACE**, age 27, of Columbia, Illinois, was sentenced before the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, East St. Louis, Illinois, to 6 months' imprisonment, followed by two months of home detention with electronic monitoring, and 3 years' supervised release. The Court also ordered **CHRISTOPHER G. MACE** to pay restitution in the amount of \$25,777.56 to DIRECT-TV, a satellite television broadcasting company.

MACE pled guilty on December 8, 2003, to a one-count Indictment charging the offense of Wire Fraud in a Scheme to Defraud DIRECT-TV. **MACE** illegally programed DIRECT-TV access cards and sold the cards to others in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343. The illegal access cards allowed **MACE** and others to obtain DIRECT-TV satellite television without paying for the service. **MACE** used computers and card programmers to install descrambler software onto the access cards. As part of the plea, **MACE** admitted to illegally programming approximately fifty access cards. **MACE** additionally provided advice to others, as a "channel operator" via the Internet, as to how to illegally reprogram the DIRECT-TV access cards.

The successful prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the assistance of the United States Postal Inspection Service. The prosecution of the case was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Norman R. Smith.